

Morienus

The Book of Morienus

Morienus Romani, Quondam Eremitae Hierosolymitani, de transfiguratione metallorum, et occulta, summaggu antiquorum Philosophorum medicina, Libellus, nusquam hactenus in lucem editus.

[Booklet of Morienus Romanus, of old the Hermit of Jerusalem, on the Transfiguration of the Metals and the Whole of the Ancient Philosophers' Occult Arts, Never Before Published.]

Being the Revelations of Morienus to Khalid Ibn Yazid Ibn Mu'awiyya, King of the Arabs of the Divine Secrets of the Magisterium and Accomplishment of the Alchemical Art

Paris, Gulielmum Guillard, 1559

Translated from the Arabic by Robertus Castrenis, 1182

Translated and Edited by Lee Stavenhagen; published as *A Testament of Alchemy* (University Press of New England, Hanover, New Hampshire, 1974)

In the name of the Lord, holy and compassionate: this is the story of how Khalid ibn Yazid ibn Mu'awiyya came into possession of the spiritual riches handed down from Stephanos of Alexandria to Morienus, the aged recluse, as is written in the book of Ghalib, bondsman of Yazid ibn Mu'awiyya.

Now Ghalib was Yazid's faithful servant, entrusted with all his master's possessions, and in time, it is said, became faithful servant likewise to Yazid's son Khalid.

Ghalib relates as follows how Khalid ibn Yazid ibn Mu'awiyya sought out Morienus the Greek, who lived as a recluse in the mountains of Jerusalem. One day, Khalid went abroad to a place called Dirmanam. He was assiduous in his quest for the Major Work, continually inquiring after any and all whom he supposed to be privy to this operation, and on this occasion a certain man came to him and desired to speak with him. Speaking of this operation, and on this occasion a certain man came to him and desired to speak with him. Hearing of this, Khalid bid the man come before him. He saluted Khalid, and Khalid returned his greeting.

The fellow then spoke thus to Khalid: "I dwell in the mountains of Jerusalem, and I have come to you, O King, with delightful news. Never has anyone before me given any king such cause to rejoice".

"And what is this news?", asked Khalid.

He replied: "I have heard many say that it is you who continually seek after the operation which the philosophers call the Major Work. I will bring to you the knowledge of it through a certain Romaeon, who lives as a recluse in the mountains of Jerusalem, but whose dwelling place I well know. He sends large amounts of gold to Jerusalem every year".

Khalid said to him: "If I find that you have told the truth, I will reward you with whatever you may ask. But if you have lied, you may expect the worst".

"Well", the fellow replied, "so be it".

Then Khalid rejoiced greatly and commanded that the man be rewarded with gifts and raiment and much else, as he had promised him. And the king commanded me along with many other of his servants to go with him.

And so we set out. After wasting much time going from one place to another, in hopes of chancing upon the recluse, we did indeed find him. He was tall of stature, though aged, and although lean, so noble of countenance and visage that he was a marvel to behold. Yet he wore a hair shirt, the marks of which were borne on his skin. We rejoiced to have found him and spoke kindly to him, at last persuading him with sweet words to relent, and brought him back with us to our own country, there presenting him to King Khalid.

Never before had we seen the king so pleased by anything. At last he turned to me and asked what had befallen us in going and coming, and I told him the story from beginning to end. Then the king regarded the aged man we had brought and wished to know by what name he was called.

The elder replied: "I am called Morienus the Greek".

And Khalid asked: "How long is it now that you have dwelt as a recluse in these mountains?".

He replied: "I began my retreat four years ago after the death of King Herakleios".
[645 AD]

Then the king bade Morienus be seated, and himself arose to give Morienus a place beside him, much pleased with his reserve, modesty, and elegance.

The king said to him: "O Morienus, recluse though you be, would it not be better that you live in the congregation of others, rather than alone in the mountains?"

He said: "Perhaps, O king. But the virtues I look for are in God and in His hand, who will do as He will. And while I grant that, as you have said, life might be easier for me than in the mountains, still only he who sows shall reap, and he must reap that which he has shown. Now I trust that I have gained some little virtue of my own. A man cannot attain repose except through labors of the spirit".

Then the king said: "These things are true, if said from the heart by one believing in God. O Morienus, I am pleased that you continue in your faith. I wished to see you and therefore sent for you".

Morienus said to him: "You need not marvel at one such as me, a mere son of the race of Adam. At best, I might only be somewhat comelier, except that the passage of time has altered me. There are many like me among men. And at the end is cruel death, than which no punishment is worse; yet a harsher punishment awaits the spirit after death. But the almighty Creator be our aid".

The king replied: "Thus God may confound man, who is only scorned the more, the more he is advanced in age".

Then the king commanded me to conduct Morienus to a dwelling near the royal palace and to fetch one of the Christian elders who might speak with him and comfort him with sweet words, and thus set his heart at peace. I did so, and the king made it his custom to come twice every day to Morienus, sitting down with him and speaking with him, but asking him nothing concerning his magistry.

The king often stayed long, and Morienus confided greatly in him. Khalid inquired repeatedly about the customs both royal and common of the Greeks, and about their times and histories. Never at a loss for a reply, Morienus retold the marvels of their deeds and discoursed expertly on their sciences, all matters such as the king had never before heard Nor had anyone before ever held such a firm place in the king's affection as Morienus soon came to hold.

Even Khalid addressed him: "O Morienus, know that I have long sought the Superior Work, but found none to counsel me in this matter. Therefore I earnestly request that you prepare for me some portion of your magistry. You shall have from me then

whatever you may ask, and I will see to it that you return to your own land, God willing. Nor need you thenceforth have any fear of me".

Morienus said to him: "O king, may God enrich you. Now I understand that you have sent for me only out of great need. But I disregard the kind assurance you added, namely that I should not fear you, inasmuch as I have no need to fear anyone save God alone. You have approached me as an equal in spirit, and now I see by your affection, excellence, and discrimination that one such as I should have no reason to keep from you anything of that which you seek, for you are indeed a man of good intentions as well as deed and most virtuous. Very well, you have attained to your initiation and instruction simply and with the greatest ease. May the Creator be praised!".

At this, King Khalid smiled, and then said: "The crudeness of haste ensnares any man, unless he be ruled by patience. I am of the house of Mu'awiyya, and there is no strength save in great God most high".

Morienus then said: "O king, may God enrich you. Now attend to the examination of this operation, and you will know it well and understand. Consider it thoroughly from beginning to end, and you will know all things that pertain to it, God willing. No one will be able to perform or accomplish this thing which you have so long sought or attain it by means of any knowledge unless it be through affection and gentle humility, a perfect and true love. For this is something which God gives into the sure keeping of his elected servants until such time as he may prepare one to whom it may be handed on from among his secrets. Thus it is only the gift of God, who chooses among his humble and obedient servants those to whom he reveals it".

Khalid said to him: "Surely we know that nothing can be done without the help and guidance of God, most high and eternal".

Then King Khalid said to me: "O Ghalib, quickly now, sit down and write all that we have said".

Thereupon Morienus continued: "Almighty God in His power created powerless servants who neither undo what He has done nor advance what He holds back, nor can they even know anything except what he grants to them. Nor are they able even to possess anything except by the strength that same God has conferred upon them, nor even govern their own spirits except insofar and so long as He has ordained for them. And from among His servants, He chose to select certain ones to seek after the knowledge He had established that rescues him who masters it from the wretchedness of this world and assures him riches to come, God willing. While those so chosen used to hand down this knowledge to their own heirs, it was at last lost and its masters

dispossessed of it when none could be found any more who knew it. But of the books which set forth the matter correctly there remained a few by the ancient seers who went before us. They left their knowledge as a legacy to their successors, whom God had chosen to become adepts according to the methods that had been explained truthfully and forthrightly by their predecessors. The ancients, however, did not refer to the matters pertaining to this science by their proper names, speaking instead, as we truly know, in circumlocutions, in order to confute fools in their evil intentions. This they did by formulating their conviction and true sayings always in parables, so that only those of great wisdom and resource would be able to uncover their true meaning. Since the ancients thus disguised this knowledge, those who would learn it must understand their maxims. Nor may they draw back from this, but must fix their faith in God and persist to the end that he bring them to this knowledge, improve their estate, and give them direct, unerring access to the methods of this science".

King Khalid then said: "Now well taught and well spoken, O Morienus, nor do I hold these precepts strange, coming as they do from a teacher of such wisdom and years as yourself, who is willing that I should learn this science. Therefore explain to me clearly that which I ask of you, sparing me needless labor over this matter which I seek from you. Tell me whether this operation is accomplished only by a single principle or by several".

Morienus spoke: "All is truly attested by many, and I will declare to you that which you seek and many other matters according to testimonies of the authorities. When you have examined these sayings and given them much study, you will find that what the authorities taught in their books is true. Now in answer to your question as to whether this operation has one root or many, know that it has but one, and but one matter and one substance of which and with which alone it is done, nor is anything added to it or subtracted to it. When certain of his disciples asked Herakleios what you have asked me, he told them how a single root grows into many things which return again to one, if they get air. Ostanos declared that the four elements, heat, wetness, cold and dryness, are basically one, and that certain of these four are compounded of the others, as though some were roots of which the others are composed. The true roots are water and fire, and composed of these are earth and air. Also, Ostanos, said to Maria that it is our quicksilver that has dominance over our earth, being very clear and pure, while earth is made of crudest water. And Hermes said that earth is the mother of the elements, which are born of her and return to her. Moses, too, said all things come of the earth and return to it. As Hermes said, just as all things come of one, so also is the Great Work done with one thing and one substance. Even so does man contain the four elements united in his body, though God created them variously as dry or separate, joined and collected or scattered. But each operation functions in a

different way, having its own color and proper application. It is thus that this matter is to be understood. The philosophers have given many such confirmations".

King Khalid then replied: "How can it be that the Major Work should have but one root and one substance? Many authorities refer to its root by a great number of different names".

Morienus said: "Its names may vary, yet I say it is but one. On this point I will cite the authorities to you, who will further confirm what I have said".

King Khalid said: "Tell me all concerning the mastery of this operation".

Morienus said: "Herakleios said to certain of his disciples that just as the date is brought forth by the palm, so also is the palm tree produced of that same date, and from its root grow the shoots by which it multiplies. And on this point, Hermes said: consider how red is made complete by partial degrees of redness. Consider also red as a whole, and the full yellow, and partial degrees of yellowness, and yellow as a whole. And likewise full black and partial degrees of blackness, and black as a whole. As the shoot emerges from a grain, so also do the many branches from the tree and the tree from its seed. A certain seer who entirely renounced the world also said things such as we have spoken, namely, that man is produced of a sperm, just as of a single grain a hundred are brought forth, from which a great tree grows. Thus too was woman made of one man, but then of both are born many children, each of a different color and appearance. Again the seer says: consider the tailor sewing his cloth, of which he has made a shift or some other garment, using only the cloth. The top, the sleeves and the skirt are all of cloth, and even sewn with thread which is itself made of cloth, nothing else being required. Thus also does the Major Work consist in itself, requiring nothing else, the proper secret of the philosophers. They moreover called it everywhere by many names, concealing it thus from all but the wise, who set forth and greatly extol this operation. But fools despise it and hold it of no account, ignorant of what it is. The wise used many terms in the books, one being "sperm", which, when converted, becomes blood, and then is consolidated with the flesh as though part of it. Thus the process of generation proceeds by a succession of forms, until man is made. Another simile is that of the palm, on account of the color and natures of its fruits before they ripen. Others are such as the tree of bad seed, or wheat, or milk, or many other names. Though all have but one root, there is an operation that alters each one, giving many new colors and natures, hence many names. Akaifrem said truly that it is only the multitude of terms which causes the masters of this operation to err. But one who knows that these terms are only like the many colors seen at conjunction will not stray from the true path of this operation".

Then King Khalid inquired further of him and said: "Now let me know concerning these colors how the change from one to another occurs, whether in a single composition, in two, or in many".

Morienus answered: "They are made in a single stage, but their names increase in number as the fire increases their heat. Zosimos spoke thus to Theosebeia: I will show you that the wise varied their maxims and compositions only because they wished them to be understood by men of wisdom and prudence, while the ignorant should remain blind to them; clearly it was for this reason that the wise wrote variously in their books of the stages of the operation. There is but one stage and one path necessary for its mastery. Although all the authorities used different names and maxims, they meant to refer to but one thing, one path and one stage. Hence, O king, you need inquire no further on this point, since what has already been said suffices. The wise spoke of many compositions, masses, and colors in the manner of parables, by which men are always misled. Still, they did not lie, but as they learned the craft of this operation only declared what they saw in such a way that it should escape others".

Then King Khalid said: "I ask you to explain its color to me as you have declared its nature, truly and without allegories or similes".

Morienus replied: "The authorities customarily first made an essence or alum of it and by means of it before treating anything with it. Perhaps it is enough that I quote Zosimos to you, who said that even though latten may be red at first, still you will have no profit of it until it is whitened. Now, be assured by the authority of Zosimos in this matter, who said to Theosebeia that blackness is first; according to this maxim then, after we have removed the blackness and achieved whitening with salt and natron, and a cold and dry substance, you call it borax, and verify Zosimos' statement that blackness is first, forthwith it is whitened with salt, which is air, and natron, which is fire, it is made red before it is finally whitened, which removes its blackness so that it is then changed to a very clear red. And Maria said that when latten, or earth, is burned with sulfur until it softens or boils, it is turned with something so fine as existed only by God's aid. And another authority said to look for one's reward when latten has been refined until it shines like fish eyes, for then it has been converted to its basic nature and color. And another said: know that the more a substance is washed, the clearer and better it will appear, but if it is not washed, it will not become clear nor be reduced to its own nature. Maria also said that there is nothing which can remove from latten, or earth, its darkness, or proper color of blackness, but quicksilver covers it at first, turning it white; when the latten overcomes the quicksilver, and reddens it. And a philosopher said that quicksilver cannot remove from latten the substance of its color, or change it except in appearance. But latten, or earth, can take on the substance of whiteness from quicksilver, which has a marvelous power to cause all the colors to appear after washing, removing blackness and impurity and rendering

white, except in the case of latten, which reddens it. And Zosimos said that only of it and with it does anything result, nor is any tincture to be had except such as is of its type. Again, Andarnah said: now know why others before us have brought together these various parables; it is that you may see that the beginning of this matter attests to its end, and its end its beginning, and that you may know that the entire thing is but one matter, having father and mother who made it and bore it, and the matter itself is its own father and its own mother. And Theosebeia asked: how is it possible for a species to deviate from its own kind? Zosimos replied: it is true that it has departed from it, and will revert to it".

Then King Khalid said: "Now having asked you concerning its nature and color, I wish to know further concerning the feel and mass of this stone, as well as its taste and the nature by which it is effected".

Moreienus replied: "This stone is of delicate touch, and there is more mildness in its touch than in its substance. In mass it is very weighty, but of sweet taste, and its proper nature is aerial".

Khalid said: "Tell me of its odor, before and after its confection".

Morienus answered: "Before confectioning, its odor is very heavy and foul. But an authority has said concerning its odor after confectioning that this water, or virgin's milk, removes from a corpse, earth, in which there is no more spirit, the odor which is foul like that of tombs. Further, an authority said that when the white spirit or milk has been made and raised, and the residual body well prepared, so that its darkness or blackness is removed and that foul odor withdrawn from it, the extraction of the spirit from the body has been accomplished. And at the moment of conjunction of that spirit with that body, great wonders will be seen. On this point, the philosophers who gathered before Maria said to her: fortunate are you, Maria, for the splendid mystery hidden from many has been revealed to you".

King Khalid said: "Explain to me the different natures. How does that which is below, or earth, rise up, and how does that which is above, or fire, descend, and how is one joined with the other so that they then are mixed in turn, and what is it that effects their mixing, and how does that blessed water or virgin's milk come to reduce and cleanse things of that foul odor which is like the odor of tombs in which the dead are buried?".

Morienus answered: "On this point, Merkovichem said to Sernale: by what names may this matter be called? And he replied: fragrance and incense. After its color is refined, there remains in it nothing of darkness or foul odor".

Then King Khalid said: "Tell me whether this matter is very common or very rare".

Morienus answered: "Now consider what an authority said, that this magistrery is customarily accomplished with a single matter. Attend well to this and apply yourself to it, and you will find no contradictions among the natures which you will perceive. Know that sulfur and orpiment burn, but do not long withstand combustion. Quicksilver always long withstands combustion. Quicksilver always long withstands combustion, while all substances which approximate the nature of fire burn quickly. Thus you may expect best results from something which burns quickly in the fire and is reduced to coals. Nor need you ever suppose that the stones will enter into this operation. Try to accomplish purification without deviating from that which the authorities have explained and declared. If what you seek is found in the dung, take it. But if you do not find it, do not reach for your purse, for anything bought at great price is found to be false in the craft of this operation. Now I have explained to you and given you to know that which you have sought. Follow this and take care not to waste anything on this matter, for no expense is necessary. On this point, Zosimos said: I enjoin you to spend nothing for this operation, particularly for the Golden Work. And again he said: whoever has required other than this stone for the Major Work is like a man attempting to climb a stair that has no steps, for he cannot, and falls flat on his face".

The king asked: "Is this thing of which you speak rare, or commonly found?".

Morienus answered: "As an authority has said, it is there for both rich and poor, for the generous and the greedy, for him who runs and him who sits. It is cast in the streets and trampled in the dung, but let none take pains to extract it. Fools have often wasted much zeal on the dung in hopes of extracting it, but they have acted in ignorance. The wise know that this unique thing is hidden and that it is what contains the four elements within itself, having power over them".

King Khalid said: "Tell me where the sources of this thing are, whence it may be gathered as there is need of it".

But Morienus fell silent and, casting his gaze downward, reflected deeply for some time. Then he raised his head and spoke: "Truly, this matter is that created by God which is firmly captive within you yourself, inseparable from you, wherever you be, and any creature of God deprived of it will die".

King Khalid said: "Give me further explanation in this matter".

Morienus continued: "The disciples of Herakleios inquired of him, saying: Master, the wise men of old handed on their power to their sons and disciples through books. Now

we earnestly request that you set forth to us something of that operation concerning which the ancient seers spoke so variously. And Herakleios responded and said: O sons of knowledge, know that the blessed creator most high created the world out of the four dissimilar elements, establishing man as most splendid in their midst".

But King Khalid said: "O Morienus, explain this still further to me".

Morienus said: "What more can I tell you? For this matter comes from you, who are yourself its source, where it is found and whence it is taken, and when you see this, your zeal for it will increase. Consider this, and you will find that it is true".

King Khalid said: "Is any other stone like this one known to you, by the power of which the same may be accomplished?".

Morienus replied: "I know no other stone like it nor having its powers. While the four elements are contained in this stone, it being thus like the world in composition, yet no other stone like it in power or nature is found in the world, nor has any of the authorities ever performed the operation other than by means of it. And the compositions attempted by those using anything else in this composition will fail utterly and come to nothing".

Then Morienus continued: "To guard you from error, I tell you again what I said at the beginning. Take care neither to depart from the root, nor seek any other form of it, for you will attain the profit and the regard you pursue only by means of this. There is no need for you to reduce it or to mix anything else with it. Again I admonish you to heed well that which we have said so far".

King Khalid said: "O Morienus, tell me the manner of conducting this operation, with God's aid".

Morienus replied: "I will tell you, according to the terms the authorities have used".

"Very well", said King Khalid.

The Morienus said: "For the conduct of this operation, you must have pairing, production of offspring, pregnancy, birth, and rearing. For union is followed by conception, which initiates pregnancy, whereupon birth follows. Now the performance of this composition is likened to the generation of man, whom the great Creator most high made not after the manner in which a house is constructed nor as anything else which is built by the hand of man. For a house is built by setting one object upon another, but man is not made o objects. His substance, rather, before he is formed, improves through successive changes until the living being is made, which

then continues from day to day and from month to month, so that the creator most high at last finishes this his great handiwork at the appointed time of maturity. So also did the creator first make the seed of the four elements, and set for them a certain time in which they should be formed, after which they might be finished as he would suffer and ordain it. And this operation is but the secret of secrets of great God most high, which he reveals to his prophets, whose souls he has gathered to himself in paradise. And except that the authorities have been, as it were, the vessel in which the prophets performed the composition of this matter, others would never have been able to do so, for none before the authorities had ever seen it nor known whence it was, until the prophets revealed it to them. Of this you may be sure".

Morienus continued: "Now I have shown you that this operation is at no great remove from the living things, nor was anything ever born or endowed with spirit or growth except for putrefaction and change of appearance. Thus it is that an authority has said that this operation avails nothing until after decay. And again he said that this matter must putrefy before it can be poured or made fluid, without which nothing will be attained".

King Khalid asked: "What is it after putrefaction?".

Morienus replied: "It is then made that by which the great creator most high completes the required composition. And know that this operation must be done twice, and two compositions must be completed, one after the other, and when the second has been completed, the whole operation is ended".

Whereupon King Khalid asked: "But how is it that it must be done twice, with two compositions? Did you not say before that this was all but one matter, having but one path?".

Morienus answered: "It is true that this is but one matter, having a single path, for its composition is the same. The one is just like the other".

And King Khalid asked: "Now, is this the composition by which you said the entire work was finished?".

Morienus replied: "O king, may God enrich you. Indeed, this composition is not the work of the hand. This one is crucial, as so many authorities have had cause to lament, for they have declared that one who by means of this knowledge discovers this composition will easily understand the entire operation, which, however, will remain concealed from one who does not".

Then King Khalid asked: "But what is this marvelous composition?".

And Morienus answered: "The authorities likened it to an alternation of natures, a wondrous mingling of heat with cold, i.e., of fire with water, and wetness with dryness, i.e., of air with earth, in exact proportions".

King Khalid said: "O Morienus, since the hand does not perform this composition, how is it done?".

Morienus answered: "According to the authorities, quicksilver and fire (of the stone) wash latten, or earth, and cleanse it of darkness. One of the authorities said that if you have the right degree of fire, quicksilver and fire are all you need in this composition, God willing. But as Esbo the Slayer said, let not our hearts be corrupted for whitening latten and interpreting books".

King Khalid then asked: "O Morienus, does a composition not precede putrefaction?".

Morienus replied: "A composition does precede putrefaction, but this is not a true composition".

"What is it then", asked Khalid.

Morienus said: "It consists in extracting the water from earth and dispersing it, so that the earth begins to putrefy. When it has thus putrefied and been cleansed, the whole operation is done, with the aid of great God most high. Then you will attain that which you have sought, which is the composition of the seers, being a third part of the whole operation. And know that you have accomplished nothing of your operation until you have cleansed, dried, and whitened the impure body, or earth, and so infused it with spirit, or fire, that the tincture descends into it and enters it with spirit, or fire, that the tincture descends into it and enters it after it is so cleansed and improved, there being no further impurity or foulness in it. For the spirit quickly enters its proper body, but you will not be able to join it with any other body, try as you will".

"May the Creator come to my aid", said the king. "Now declare to me the second operation, and tell me whether it be the completion of the first".

Morienus answered: "It is indeed. When you have treated the body, or earth, in the way we have described, put it into a fourth part of the ferment, or milk. For the fermentation of gold is like that of bread. Then put it in the sun, or in dung, to be warmed, so that it is made one substance and body, and dried. Then bless God and begin the washing. Take one part of the mortifying substance and cook it for three days, being careful not to lengthen or shorten the time, and do not let the fire, which should be gentle, go out or burn to low. If you neglect this, your pot and everything in it will be ruined, much to your loss. Then wait seventeen days, after which return to

your pot and open it. Change the liquid in it, replacing it with fresh, and do all this three times, until the fermentation of this gold is finished and this fourth of the brew is reduced by half. After twenty days, take it out and dry it; in Arabic, it is called the Elixir. Then put the washed and prepared body upon your furnace, and moisten it daily with a fourth part of the mortified matter which remains, taking care that the flame of the fire does not touch the pot, which will be destroyed if it does. Finally, place the pot in a large furnace and start a fire on top of it, keeping it up without diminution for two days and nights. Then take the pot from the fire and praise the Creator for that which he has given you".

King Khalid said: "I will do so, and may God be ever praised, amen".

Morienus continued: "Now I will explain further to you about this, the whole good of which consists in seeking the joining and concordance of bodies which are shattered and then brought together again and which are so purified and treated as to appear directly by the power of fire. Those who seek after knowledge of these bodies must understand their pursuit and capture, their dissolution and composition, how to build them up and boil them down, must know their natures and heats, and how to build furnaces for them and light the fires at the right places therein, and must know the right number of days for each. For I have attained to the full knowledge of these things by the will of the great Creator most high. And the very root of this knowledge is to act with care and perception at the time of composition, avoiding all haste and error, and watching patiently day and night for fixation. But that which prepares this body is blood, or virgin's milk, for it unites and joins all the various substances and properties into one body, it being only necessary to apply to them a gentle heat the long continues at the same degree, neither increasing nor decreasing. But the substance eudica [glaze] should be used to agitate the bodies you have converted to earth so that they are not burned, for if they were quickly consumed, they would not long contain their spirits. Eudica consists well with all bodies, enlivening and preparing them without confusing them, but converting certain of them into others and resisting the heat of the fire. If you wish to obtain eudica, look for it in vitreous minerals. But having found it, you must take care not to use it if its spirit has escaped, for you would spoil your operation. Therefore preserve it when you find it. Now the foul earth readily receives the white sparks and prevents the destruction of the blood, or air, or virgin's milk, during decoction. But such is the blood's strength that it must be broken in order to promote rather than impede, and this is done after whatever remaining still dark of the confused minerals has been whitened, thus accomplishing the full fruit of this magistry, the truth of which you may well not at first have seen. That is in sum the secret of your operation, as I have condensed it and set it forth for you. For surely, one part of this matter placed upon a thousand parts of silver converts it all into fine, red gold, God willing. Therefore, seek nothing else beyond this matter,

And may God enrich you, and all the adepts of this knowledge. But the root of its possession is only the gift of great God most high, who has awarded it to his servants".

Thereupon Morienus began to enumerate the various substances, saying: "O king, may God enrich you. Attend fully to me, that you may hear and understand all that I am going to say to you".

And King Khalid said: "O Morienus, tell me what you would have me know".

Morienus spoke: "The thing in which the entire accomplishment of this operation consists are the red vapor, the yellow vapor, the white vapor, the green lion, ocher, the impurities of the dead and of the stones, blood, eudica, and foul earth".

King Khalid said: "Explain these terms to me".

Morienus replied: "Before I explain them to you, I will both bring before you the things called by these names, that you may see them, as well as work with them in your presence. These ten are of the same family, and if you wish to seek them, distribute, and dissolve them, and stiffen, join, and confect them exactly as I am about to do before you, you have but to do likewise, for this is the root of this knowledge and operation, which many look for in all sorts of minerals, wet and dry. But do you as one who sees, for the ignorant is not as the wise, nor the blind as the sighted. Do not depart from that which I have set forth for you and shown you, for you will go astray. There are great hindrances to knowledge. But one who has seen this operation performed is not as one who has sought it only through books, for there are books which mislead those in quest of this knowledge. And the greater part of those books are so obscure and disorganized that only those who wrote them can understand them. But he who is eager for this knowledge and pursues it does well, for by means of it he will gain access to strange things he had never known before".

King Khalid: "The truth of what you say blossoms and shines in your explanation".

Morienus continued: "In preparation of the body, or earth, for purification, you make it very hard and dry in nature, and then whiten it by purging and washing, and invest it with the spirit, aid the quest for the white or milky vapor, for the red or fiery or virgin's milk, before the elixir is put onto it, for the elixir is absorbed only by a fine and pure body having no foulness in such a way that it is beautifully tinted after the elixir has passed through it. This is the composition of the authorities, and is the first composition. Then begin in the Creator's name and with his vapor takes the whiteness from the white vapor. Now pour out these things and set them about, taking an equal weight of each. Then they are mixed together. Pack the mixture in a vessel that will

just hold the full charge. This is the best way to handle these things, for they contain vapors which escape unless sealed in a container. Now stop the mouth of this vessel well with the luting cement which the authorities use, adding a little salt to it to make it stronger, that it may better withstand the heat of the fire. Let the furnace be heated with sheep dung or olive leaves and the vessel with its contents put into it to sublime. The sublimation should be done after sunset and the vessel allowed to stand until the cool of the evening. Then unstop the vessel and shatter it, examining that which is thus extracted, and if you find it well consolidated, like a stone, grind it thoroughly. Sift it and put it into another vessel, the bottom of which is rounded. Construct for it a philosophers' furnace and let a philosophers' fire be started in it and kept going for a space of twenty-four days. After this time, you should withdraw the vessel from the furnace and dry that which you find in it. Join one part of this of the unpurified, proceeding in this order one after the other until all are mixed together, from which the elixir then may be made. Then examine its interior, and if you find the whiteness retained, well fixed and calcined, not driven off by the heat of the fire even after much heating, you have accomplished both natures of this operation. But know that if you had given your entire kingdom and brought all your subjects together at once to project the whiteness into the purified matter, they would have been powerless to do so by such means. For the spirit readily enters its own body, but if you try to put it into some foreign body, you will waste your efforts. This truth is perfectly clear".

"You have spoken truly, as I have witnessed", said King Khalid, "and may God receive the souls of his philosophers into his keeping".

Here is another composition from the dialogues of Morienus the Greek with King Khalid ibn Yazid ibn Mu'awiyya.

Morienus said: "Take the white vapor, or virgin's milk, and the green lion, or fire, and red ocher, or fire, and the impurity of the dead, or earth; dissolve them and cause them to ascend and unite, using for each part of the green lion three parts of the impurity. Then put one part of the white vapor and two parts of the ocher in a green vessel to be boiled, stopping its mouth well with cement. Put this in the sun until it dries, and then put the elixir into it. Pour enough of the sanguine water over it to cover it, and after three days, moisten it with the foul water. But take care neither to cut short nor extend the time, nor let the fire go out, for it must be done just so. Likewise, see that the fire is not too hot, for your jar will be destroyed and everything in it also. Wait seventeen days, then go to your jar, open it and take out the water you will find in it, replacing it with foul water, keeping the jar on the furnace. After twenty days, take it from the furnace and dry the elixir which it contains. Then take the well-washed body in which you find the whiteness pure and fixed and put it in as small a jar as will contain it and will just fit the furnace which you have made to take it. Heat it strongly in the furnace, but do not let the flame touch it, for that would destroy it. Then take such a quantity of

the elixir as to form eleven parts for every ten parts of the white body. Mix these, and for every ounce of this mixture, add one-fourth of a dram of eudica. Then put the jar in a large furnace and build a fire over it, keeping it going for two days without being extinguished at any hour of the day or night. When this is done, take out what you find in the jar and praise the great Creator most high for what He has given you".

Now here is an explanation of the various substances according to Morienus, who said that the philosophers referred to the impure body as lead. The purified body is tin. The green lion is glass and almagra is latten, although it may have been called red earth earlier. And blood is orpiment, and foul earth is foul sulfur. Eudica is apart from all these and is called glaze, or the dregs and impurities of glass. The red vapor is red orpiment, the white vapor quicksilver and the yellow vapor sulfur. This is the nature of the white vapor, the green lion, and the foul water.

"Therefore", said Morienus, "keep these three to yourself. For though men seek this operation among all others, they will go utterly astray until sun, or fire, is compounded in a single body with earth and moon, which will not occur until God wills. But you asked me what it is that men think to be the secret of this operation of the magistry and with what they suppose the operation to be accomplished. Some thought it to be earth, or a stone, or an egg, or blood, urine, or vinegar. And they ground and assayed and extracted and dug around after all these things as their fancy took them, but erring the more, the more confident they were of finding what they sought. Now you should know that earth and stone and all those things I have named, in which men trust, are false and come to no good issue. The whole key to accomplishment of this operation is in the fire, with which the minerals are prepared and the bad spirits held back, and with which the spirit and body are joined. Fire is the true test of this entire matter. And if the truth of anything pertaining to this magistry is not at once apparent, that will come to nothing, so when it does not spring up nor mingle with the impure substance to form one body, you will looking vain for something of that which you seek to come forth. For when you do as I have told you, you will find what you seek, God willing. Now know this well, and understand and remember it, and know the composition of this matter and give it much study, which will reveal to you the straight path. Nor can anything more then be hidden from you. And even more fundamental is it that you know what the higher minerals are, so that the entire work be not ruined. But in answer to your question about the white vapor, or virgin's milk, you may know that it is a tincture and spirit of those bodies already dissolved and dead, from which the spirits have been withdrawn. Then the spirits are again restored to them. But any body lacking spirit is dark. It is the white vapor that flows in the body and removes its darkness, or earthiness, and impurity, uniting the bodies into one and augmenting their waters. For the black impurity is not persistent, and when its blackness is removed, the water will thus be strengthened and increased,

so that its beauty will appear and the tincture will be accomplished in it. You should know this well and understand it, and know that when you have thus accomplished the tincture in it, you are on the right track toward that finest red gold, than which nothing better or purer is to be found. For this reason it is called Roman gold. Without the white vapor, there could have been no pure gold nor any profit in it. Now the sum and full proof of it is in placing one part of this alchemy on a thousand parts of silver, which will be reddened and purified, just as we have said, if great God most high so wills, for there is no strength nor help except by the will of great God most high".

Here ends the book of Morienus, as it is called. Thanks be to God, amen.